

That is not dead which can eternal lie, and with strange aeons even DAVE LANGFORD, 94 LONDON ROAD, READING, BERKSHIRE, RG1 5AU, UK, may publish. Subscriptions: 5 issues for £2 sterling; cheques/money orders to **Ansible**, Girobank transfer to a/c 24 475 4403. Or: \$3.50 to US agents Mary & Bill Burns (23 Kensington Court, Hempstead, NY 11550); \$4 to Aussie agent Irwin Hirsh, 2/416 Dandenong Rd, North Caulfield, Vic 3161. Sample issue: send SAE or IRC (but if reading this you hardly need a sample, do you?). Phone: Reading (0734) 665804. Electronic mail to Prestel mailbox 733631000. Printed labels by KEITH FREEMAN and handwritten ones by new database manager HAZEL: labels should be nearly self-explanatory (carrying the issue number to which you're paid up, or T for Trade, or some frightful Egyptian imprecation). Cartoons are by BRAD FOSTER (right), ALEXIS GILLILAND (withia) and TARAL (back cover). **Ansible 44** goes to 450+ addresses. Didn't think I could do it, a whole masthead without mentioning the Hugo... oops.

SILENT SUMMER

The question which failed to be on fans' lips through the summer of '85 was, "What happened to bloody **Ansible**?" Many things, beginning with Rob Hansen and Avedon Carol....

Madly we'd volunteered to host their wedding reception here in June. In preparation, Hazel scraped the thicker accumulations of filth from the walls -- revealing an attack of house cancer in the form of the dreaded Dry Rot. The £1800 repair bill (paid largely out of **Ansible** subscriptions, of course) drove your editor to expend valuable brain cells on mindless and degrading jobs, including computer software and reviewing Piers Anthony novels -- anything for quick cash -- while the round file bulged with pathetic letters from fans demanding their **Ansible** fix, and Irwin Hirsh conveyed displeasure by mailing us dead wombats. This issue reaches you only because Hazel (finding a broken, enfeebled Langford trying simultaneously to concoct three review columns, a VAT return and a bit of the unwritten novel for which Arrow have already printed the covers) took the mailing list firmly into her own hands. Farewell, computerization. Of course Hazel at once went down with 'flu, and....

The Carol/Hansen wedding was suitably bizarre, and took place amid much ethnic rain, in a portion of London even more slum-like than East Ham. ("I haven't been warm once since I got here" -- AC.) The bride wore her famous black tuxedo and trousers in hope that Martin Morse Wooster would once again describe this ensemble as a dress. ("But Avedon, he's not going to be here." "Since when has that stopped him?") The bridegroom wore clothes. When the soggly radiant couple were hauled off for pre-ceremony indoctrination, British fandom lost no time in explaining to US visitors that this was because marriage according to the law of this land requires on-the-spot proof of ability to consummate the union. In the ceremony, it was Malcolm Edwards who gleefully whispered that the registrar "looked just like Marty Cantor": thus unnerved, this functionary uttered the fatal phrase "Mrs Hansen" and was swiftly hospitalized.

A reception at **Ansible** HQ followed next day (22 June). Cast out by Hazel's No Smoking edict, the "cancer party" huddled under a dripping pear-tree, heartened against the raging elements by Ted White's inexhaustible supplies of wicked substances. Abi Frost's bra strap achieved fame as (enthusiastically assisted by ATom) she detached a safety-pin for roach-holding use. Saner people crowded the Food Room, the Booze Room and the Dry Rot Viewing Room, with a breakaway party of bibliophiles upstairs appraising the library -- Vinç Clarke checking price tags while Chuch Harris (Sole Prop., Daventry Academy of Caprine Studies) wheeled nubile ladies with offers of free first editions. Chris Priest talked about computers and Lisa Tuttle yawned. Alexis Gilliland dashed off vignettes for posterity. Only two gatecrashers were recorded, neither from Puerto Rico. "This is a **convention**," declared Mr White: to complete the Total Experience I let him sign my battered Ace double of **Android Avenger**. (And forgot having done so, leading to a wholly spurious account of this incident in **SF Chronicle** -- sorry, Andy!) When all was over, the body-strewn floors resembled the last act of **Hamlet** sprinkled with potato crisps.

... AND HERE WE SEE AN EXAMPLE OF A SIBLE...

BUT, EXCUSE ME, ISN'T THAT SUPPOSED TO BE

AN SIBLE?



Several thousand book launch parties occurred at London's "Forbidden Planet" bookshop, all attended by the same crowd of hacks and freeloaders (save for the strangely depopulated launch of the paperback **Battlefield Earth**). Newly famous Wm Gibson was among those feted, having flown over to discuss an incipient film of "Burning Chrome": his polished expression of bemusement provoked much local admiration.

Glasgow's summer Albacon reportedly fell into two categories, the boring, lacklustre bits and Harlan Ellison. **Ansible** missed both, though not the prior pub meeting at which Messrs Gamma & Tate (the Forbidden Planetoids) grumbled about having to dispose of countless expensively printed flyers when HE switched the date of a signing session... and then many more when he switched it back again... after which they cancelled the whole thing in pique. Lightning event report from Avedon: "We all got together at a pub and listened to Holdstock talk to Ellison about sex while he wanted to talk business (perhaps buying a Holdstock story for **Last Dangerous Visions**?). Amazingly, HE was still worried about whether I carried a 9-year-old grudge: after a tearful rapprochement, he departed with the happy assurance that his conscience need no longer feel, as it were, tweaked.

Becon happened too: I don't remember much, since during my brief visit I got to drinking with Barry Bayley, a fatal mistake if you value your dignity or your kidneys.

Summer, such as it was, ended with what after persistent hotel stropiness and growing local exhaustion may have been the final Silicon up in Newcastle. (Advance omen at Disclave: a woman passed out flyers for "SILICON 1 -- Instead of talking about imaginative fiction, guests at SILICON will live it!": informed by Ted White that there'd been a Silicon for years, she was quite worried until told... "Oh, it's **British!** They don't count.") Instead of talking about SF, guests at Silicon were forced to live the usual silliness, culminating in a "Sex Game" wherein crack male and female teams vied to display superior, er, sensuality. A blindfolded Mike Glicksohn, trying to identify a slimy vegetable salad by touch, hazarded: "Martin Hoare at the end of this weekend." Greg Pickersgill, failing to detect the taste of Bovril dissolved in yoghurt, made several deeply obscene guesses. Laura Wheatley, after not identifying leather by its smell, cried: "You can't expect me to get that, I'm a vegetarian!" Female superiority was duly established. We mercifully omit Chris Evans's serious literary analysis of "The Science Fiction of Margaret Thatcher", replete with examples like Maggie's alleged SF novel of First Contact, titled **Sod Off, Fuckface**. Alasdair Gray, meanwhile, displayed his usual horizontal bonhomie.

Traditional foul beer drove a small party away for Sunday lunch, helping me miss the fabled Malcolm Edwards Phone Call From Australia. Britain in '87 was official, and... I've met with many unnerving receptions on staggering back from the pub, but never before a standing ovation. Thanks, folks.

BLOODY HELL!

Here's the Hugo list, courtesy of Aussiecon's amazingly speedy Roy Ferguson. Do you want the detailed statistical breakdown? I thought not. There were 443 valid and 23 invalid ballots, the winners being: NOVEL [395 ballots cast]: **Neuromancer** by William Gibson (Chris Priest, as UK agent for Mr G, turns handsprings). NOVELLA [355]: "Press Enter" by John Varley. NOVELETTE [349]: "Bloodchild" by Octavia Butler.

SHORT [345]: "Crystal Spheres" by David Brin. NON-FICTION [313]: **Wonder's Child: My Life in SF** by Jack Williamson. DRAMATIC PRESENTATION [413]: 2010. PRO EDITOR [358]: Terry Carr. PRO ARTIST [330]: Michael Whelan. SEMI-PROZINE [325]: **Locus**. FANZINE [284]: **File 770**. (After **F770's** victory, Mike Glycer declared a "withdrawal" from future competition -- something not covered by the rules. Meanwhile, weary of losing to **Locus** in the semi-prozine category, Dick Geis has declared his **SF Review** to be once again a fanzine.) FANWRITER [284]: Dave Langford! FANARTIST [287]: Alexis Gilliland. JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD [291; not a Hugo]: Lucius Shepard.

THE OPEN CONSPIRACY

The name of our 45th Worldcon (in Brighton, of course -- both the Metropole and the mighty Conference Centre) is, for no evident reason, Conspiracy '87. It ousted the Phoenix (Arizona) quasi-bid by 400 to 100 votes. Guests of honour are Alfred Bester, Doris Lessing, and (fan) Ken & Joyce Slater, plus Jim Burns as Artist Goll and me as "special fan guest", and Brian Aldiss in the role of toastmaster. Address is now: **PO Box 43, Cambridge, CB1 3JJ**; attending membership is £19.50 (USA \$30, Australja \$A40), supporting £10 (\$15, \$A20), with a £2 (\$3, \$A3) discount for paid-up presupporters. Agents include Mary & Bill Burns (US, as masthead) and Justin Ackroyd (GPO Box 2708X, Melbourne, Vic 3001, Australia).

Reports of Aussiecon are understandably incoherent. Some 1800-2000 fans were present, the largish Brit contingent being swelled by freebies from official Conspiracy airline British Airways. (The most mysterious free ride must be Paul Heskett's. "Fred Harris rang me on the previous Monday asking if I'd like to go to Oz. I had nothing better to do....")

Chris Hughes & Jan Huxley summarized the city: "Melbourne (Melbun, as they say here): trams, MacDonalds, palm trees, awful coffee, cheap steaks and wine, fountains, strange conventions.... Fantastic." [CH/JH]

Joseph Nicholas's postcard showed the 1880 Victoria Hotel, "the site of the fan programme, which was itself pretty good despite various irritating snarl-ups.... Valma Brown will be standing for GUFF for a trip to Brighton in 1987. As one of her nominators, I can say that she's ideologically sound and will struggle against global hegemonization wherever it may be found: she is therefore the candidate to vote for." [JMN]

Martin Morse Wooster was diverted from the trail of scandal and horror: "Inimitable presence of J. Nicholas has caused me to talk about American politics, New Zealand politics, Aussie politics.... Now I know what American cultural imperialism really means." [MMW]

Paul Dormer sent his notes to **Small Mammal** (the bum), thus: "The heavy voting for Conspiracy was a result of bribery: British Airways had freighted over a large quantity of Brighton rock. This served to keep those fans manning the British table fed. The con committee suggested the sticks ought to be peace-bonded under their weapons policy.... On a panel, Frank Herbert stated that he'd never written a **Dune** book for money. The masquerade was a bit of a shambles -- the stage was so low that most people had difficulty seeing the contestants, particularly 'Conan the Baby'. The Hugo presentation was rather better, though the slides used to announce nominations always seemed to be in the wrong order... also the best novella winner was flashed up on the screen as 'John Varley, Pless Enter'.... British presence was strong in the fan programme, including a Bob Shaw talk and a demonstration of the Astral Pole by Joe Nicholas (the report is unclear as to whether Judith Hanna's cry of 'Joseph Nicholas stop biting your nails this instant' occurred before or after this demonstration)...." [PD/SM]

A surprise Worldcon bid (as hinted in **A41** before Kees van Toorn told me to shut up) is Holland in 1990, with a steering committee of Kees & Angelique van Toorn, Lynne Ann Morse and Roelof Goudriaan. Pre-supporting memberships £4 (blimey, 400% inflation), \$5, or 15 guilders, to PO Box 95370, 2509 CJ The Hague, Netherlands -- or to "a rapidly growing network of international agents". This should fill US fans with paranoia: Conspiracy won its bid in Australia and (as I understand recent rule changes), Holland in 1990 will be voted at Conspiracy. An un-American plot! The domino theory!

The 1990 opposition provoked Irwin Hirsh to paranoid speculations of his own: "A comment on LA-Con II's allotment of money for bidding for the 1990 Worldcon: at today's prices it

would cost about \$40 to take out a supporting membership (the '88 Worldcon and vote in the Site Selection. So \$10,000 can buy 250 votes, about 20-25% of votes usually cast. A scary thought." The amount set aside by LA-Con was in fact \$20,000. Which links with another problem reported in US news-zines -- the increasing interest of US Internal Revenue in profits of "non-profit-making" cons. Seems the "charitable foundation" position is being made untenable by taxmen's discovery that private individuals (especially dealers and artists) make vast spinoff profits.... [F770]

Thus Teresa Nielsen Hayden reveals an Informed Source's proposed slogan for one future bid: "If Boston wins the bid for 1989, and LA for 1990, they'll have so much left-over money that they'll need Baltimore in 1992."

CHANGE & DECAY IN ALL AROUND I SEE

Imagine magazine bit the dust in August, the issue on the stands being appropriately numbered 30. This is all TSR's fault: "Der Fuhrer Amerikanisch has ordered the final solution," wailed erstwhile editor Paul Cockburn. "You lucky sod, Langford, you're the only contributor to issue 31 who's being paid," report envious (and premature) games fans. Within hours of the sinking, ace film reviewer Colin Greenland was scuttling aboard the rival ship **White Dwarf** (where his column resumes in January).... **Chris Priest & Lisa Tuttle** have separated -- she remains at the old address. Chris's customary gloom was intensified by the collapse of an almost finalized \$200,000 film deal for **The Glamour.... A Plague of Babies** continues, with Leah (& Steve) Higgins and Jenny (& Dave) Raggett in an expectant state -- likewise recidivists Rochelle (& Alan) Dorey and Margaret (& Terry) Hill. As for Coral (& Rob) Jackson, travel back with me in time to **Checkpoint 98**, June/July 1979, in which Leroy Kettle wrote: "Dr Jackson and his lovely wife Dr Mrs Dr Jackson are building an extension to their mansion to house the expected new arrival, which they will call Hugo." Again SF predicts the future: with a double dose of Gernsback homage, the new outbreak is named Hugo Ralph Jackson....

Stu Shiffman underwent 12 hair-raising hours of brain surgery at the end of July: all now seems well. "He's missing most of the hair on the back of his head, but hey, he always likes wearing those snappy broad-brimmed hats anyway" [PNH]. In an exclusive bedside interview Stu proudly revealed that his medical bill ("med insurance is taking care of most expenses... I hope") had reached \$10,075.... **Knave** editor Ian Pemble has abandoned girlie magazines for a job in advertising: will his successor be as eager to pay vast sums for old Langford fanzine articles? Stay tuned.... **Paul Skelton** begs me to tell the world he's folding his fanzine **SFD** ("Look, I know it ranks, on the scale of fannish importance, about on a par with Keith Walker discovering a typo, but --").... **Avedon Carol** wishes to make it clear that "no version of my name or any name I have used in the past or plan to use in the future contains any of the following: Hansen. Mrs. Rob.".... **Jon Cowie** complained of vile allegations about Becon last issue, though the rest of the Becon committee didn't seem to mind much.... **Lucy Huntzinger** has published (in Robert Lichtman's nifty **Trap Door**) details of her open-secret marriage to Phil Palmer, and claims that in a brave attempt at contraflow consummation, Phil will be moving to San Francisco....

Late RIP note: Theodore Sturgeon died on 8 May aged 67; the eulogies are long past, but it remains a deeply depressing event. (Dan Morgan was unkeen on the widely syndicated Aldiss tribute: "I admired Sturgeon's writing for its human yet fantastical qualities. Pity Brian didn't see fit to dwell on those rather than drivelling on about the poor sod's sexual proclivities, which are completely irrelevant at this stage. God save us from obits written by such friends!" [DM]) **Jack Gaughan**, famed professional artist since the early 60s and winner of several Hugos, died of cancer on 21 July, aged 54 [SFC].... **Bill Evans**, long-time Washington fan and bibliographer (eg. the legendary Pavlat/Evans **Index of SF Fanzines**) died on 24 June, aged 64 [SFC].... A skeletal hand burst in July from the grave of the horror/fantasy fanzine **Gothique**, bony fingers clutching a 20th Anniversary Issue courtesy of the British Fantasy Society. (80p inc. P&P from editor Stan Nicholls, Flat 2, Allison Ct, 43 Parkhill Rd, London, NW3 2YD). Your reporter is not afraid to admit having stuffed himself with free food at the merry exhumation party.

COMPLAINTS DEPT.: LETTERS

eresa Nielsen Hayden: "A splendidly wretched story is going the rounds regarding doings at Pocket Books. They recently brought out yet another Star Trek novel, called *Killing Time* (seems to be an unlucky title), by Sondra Marshak & Myrna Culbreath. The original MS had K&S overtones: you know, amateur-written ST universe spinoff stories, some book-length, ranging from suggestive-but-mushy romances [that run heavily to Liebestod endings] to hardcore porn, all featuring a homosexual relationship between Kirk & Spock. Bizarre stuff, but it has a fair-sized, intensely loyal, rather secretive, and overwhelmingly female following. Anyway -- Paramount Studios loathes K&S, and when the MS was sent for approval someone there marked all those passages for deletion. Time passes; Pocket prints 250K copies and ships out some 100-150K of them. *Killing Time's* been on the stands for a while now, and even though Pocket is pulling every copy it can lay hands on, and shredding the copies in their warehouse, it's much too late to get them all back. Apparently, somewhere in the period circa Mimi Panich's departure from Pocket and Karen Haas's arrival, an unidentified and gremlinish hand went through the MS and carefully marked 'STET' next to all the passages Paramount has asked to have deleted. The friend who told me about this snafu read one of the objected-to scenes to me over the phone, and while it isn't the really raunchy 'He'd wondered if it were green, too' stuff, the tone is unmistakable. Cognoscenti are snapping up all the still-available copies; it's bound to become a collector's item, and as everyone observes, it couldn't happen to a more deserving publisher." [TNH]

Ted White: "Words cannot express the emotions I felt when I discovered that Martin Morse Wooster had done it again: Made A Few Factual Errors in his High Class Reportage...."

"First, I am not the 'editor of Stardate'. Dave Bischoff is Stardate's editor; I am editorial director.

"Second, it is wholly untrue that 'controversy has already erupted between [me] and the publisher', and equally false to say that the publisher 'wants much more Trek material'. I have no idea where Martin picked up these bits of gossip, but it certainly wasn't from an informed source. The publisher, by the way, is Dana Lombardy, who may or may not fit Wooster's description of him as 'an unreconstructed Trekkie', but is the author of the gaming columns in *Analog* and *Asimov's*, and thus no stranger to sf magazines.

"Stardate will not be a 'Trekkie magazine' but a multimedia sf magazine -- the first such, in fact. While *Star Trek* will have its place in the pages, so also will *Dr Who*, sf role-playing gaming, comics (starting with Steve Stiles' 'On the Brightside') and straight sf. To ensure we achieve high standards of quality, we have set up a budget which offers 10¢ a word -- making *Stardate* the highest paying magazine in the sf field (sorry about that, Terry). The appeal to me is to reconcile all these elements in a dynamic magazine.

"I'm amused to hear that bets are being taken over our failure. Could this be wishful thinking on Wooster's part? At the just-past Disclave he and Darrell Schweitzer (two of my favourite people) could be seen with their heads together quite frequently, apparently praying for our speedy failure. (Darrell now flinches and turns away when he sees me coming; is he afraid I'll follow Harlan's example and punch him out for repeatedly calling me 'the worst editor in the history of sf'? If he is, I'm afraid he overestimates himself....)

"Speaking of Disclave, the highlight (or something) of that convention was the Meet The Pros In Their Underwear party. An amazing sight, and not one for the squeamish. I had never before realized how many of this country's lesser pros were overweight men with tiny dinkies pointing aimlessly through the stained fabric of their jockey shorts. There were a few women in similar states of undress, but unfortunately those who exposed the most had the least to reveal. A pathetic party, all in all; I left at the point when Darrell Schweitzer was stripped to his none too clean underpants. I've seen monkeys in zoos before.

"PS: *Stardate's* editorial address is: 1010 Vermont Ave NW, Suite 910, Washington, DC 20005. Phone: 202 393-5233." [TW]

Greg Benford: "I hazard a guess that the 'unattributable rumour' you cite in *Ansible* arose from my describing my trip

to the USSR to David Pringle, and mentioning that as is usual, the CIA came and asked me questions about it. This is a loooong way from being an agent. It does raise the amusing idea of the intelligence community trying to infiltrate *Interzone* through Pringle, and finding it resembles the Balkans in 1913...."

"Actually, I heard in the USSR that Eurocon 85 was axed because the KGB couldn't see monitoring all those people with their weird habits...." [GB]

David Pringle: "I wish Colin Greenland had not decided to air *Interzone's* dirty linen in public, and I have no desire to make a detailed response to his remarks in A43. Yes, there was a dispute -- an argument which dragged on for several months -- and yes, Colin has resigned from the magazine. I'd like to correct one of his statements. 'David Pringle wants complete control of the magazine,' he says. That is not so. In fact, I now share editorial responsibility for IZ equally with Simon Ounsley. I am very happy with this arrangement, and confident that it will last for a long time. Moreover, since Colin's resignation we have 'promoted' Judith Hanna from Assistant to Associate Editor: she will be closely involved with the magazine's day-to-day running and will have a full say, with Simon and me, in the choice of stories." [DP]

[Simon wrote making the same points, slightly obscured by an elaborate metaphor involving vibrators, grapes and fudge.]

Joseph Nicholas: "BALLARD SHOCK HORROR! Which famous, Booker-nominated, *Guardian* Fiction Prize-winner, invited to review a book for CND's magazine *Sanity*, spurned the offer with the statement that he was strongly pro-Bomb and totally opposed to CND and all its works? None other than the author of *Empire of the Sun*, actually, whose letter now hangs on the wall of the CND Publications Office beneath the legend 'Attention All Ballard Fans!' In the light of this, can David Pringle still proclaim Ballard to the skies?" [JMN]

[To quote Mr Ballard in *Re/Search* 8/9: "I want more nuclear weapons! ...I want my own cruise missile at the bottom of my garden." He should like my *The Leaky Establishment*.]

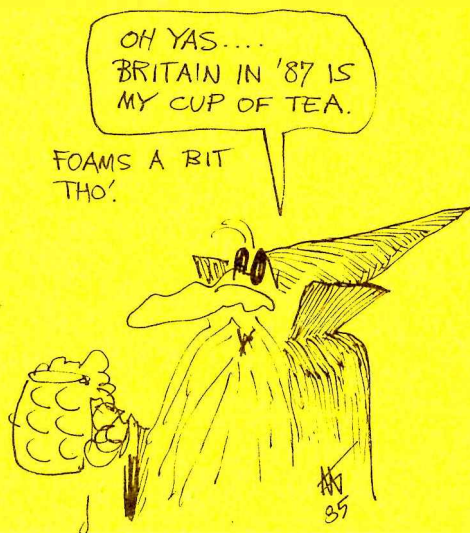
Brian Aldiss: "Last night, glamorous Central London Poly was the scene of a meeting for many celebrities, artistes, & notorious intellectuals, as Channel 4 videoed *A History of Psychiatry*. The latter was an amazing, one-man, spontaneous, ad-libbed, free-association caper by John Sessions. Gavrilo Princep started the 20th century, Freud had his room decorated by a Mr Schicklgruber, etc. The whole masterminded by KEN CAMPBELL, genius of Theatre, Mime, and N.4. Glimpsed in the 100-strong audience were singer Dotti Green, Gerry Webb, Brian Aldiss...." [BA, 26 June]

Charles Platt: "Andy Porter has quoted a large chunk of my *Ansible* 43 piece without permission or attribution. I seriously think you should complain about his stealing your news. (All he had to do was call me and get a fresh quote from me.)" [CP]

[Semi-professional Andy, whose *SF Chronicle* ethical standards are an example to us all, has jolly decently issued a correction and acknowledgement in his September issue. He's also cancelled Charles's "Gabby Snitch" column in *SFC*, owing to horror at a quite funny Platt hoax in *Fantasy Review* -- inventing an obscure, pseudonymous Stephen King porno novel to pull collectors' legs. King's lawyer failed to see the joke, and demanded mass grovelling: *Ansible* has thus reluctantly shelved its similar exposé of early J.G. Ballard contributions to the *News of the World* and *Beano*.]

Benedict S. Cullum: "I'm halfway through a subscription to *Warrior* and was dismayed, on returning home from college, to find I'd received no copies since Easter. I rang up Quality and learned that the Marvel/Quality action was over; that the writer involved (Alan Moore, I think) had reluctantly agreed to change the name of his *Marvelman* strip; that *Warrior* was currently being redesigned; and that the reason for this was the return of issues 25/26 by the wholesalers.

"It seems that W.H. Smith Wholesale love *Warrior*. WHS Retail, though, don't know where to put it, won't take it, and leave the wholesale department to return 40,000 copies to Quality with the message that they'll stock it, perhaps even



sell the odd copy, provided Quality change the format. It's not a juvenile publication and with its present design cannot be marketed elsewhere on their shelves.

"Quality reckon they'll have the new format ready soon. What gets me is the total control WHS seem to have over such ventures. I remember that you, when associated with **Extro**, had similar problems. I'd like to contact someone with a bit of clout in the WHS organization but I've got this horrible vision of any publication I mention being put on a blacklist by some faceless director as a punishment for having the kind of readership that answers back. Any ideas?" [BSC]

George Hay: "Met Karl Edward Wagner and his lady the other day, and heard how, because he is now doing story treatments for films, he gets limited-English-vocabulary phone calls from Dino de Laurentiis. Thus:

"Karl -- you know about Rambo?"

"Yes, Dino, I know about Rambo."

"You know about kidnapping in Beirut?"

"Yes, Dino, I know about kidnapping in Beirut."

"You know about Delta Force?" (Apparently this is some Italian Special Task Force.)

"Yes, Dino, I know about Delta Force."

"Well, Karl, I was thinking, suppose Rambo goes with Delta Force to take out terrorists in Beirut, would make good film, no? You want to make film outline treatment?" [CH]

R.I. Barycz: "Starman enjoyed greatly. Not much can be said about it as film -- the plot was swiss choesy as usual, the visuals impressive, the science suspect (as usual) and even the non-science, eg. the incredibly touching episode where the Starman brings a dead deer tied on the bonnet of a hunter's car back to life. All together now: aaahhh. But I recall some natural history TV programme on US National Parks etc that allow deer hunting and I'm sorry to say that before ye noble hunter ties his kill to his bonnet he takes his Bowie knife and disembowels the creature to (a) reduce weight and (b) stop his venison tainting as the vegetable matter in the deer's guts ferments away. Very chauvinist pic, too -- he leaves the heroine pregnant but with his baby entirely, genetic inheritance and all. Well, what else did one expect from a Starman with seven balls...." [RIB]

Charles Stross: "Would the 1985 Cassandra Summer Workshop bear any resemblance to last year's, or would the nature of the beast be transformed by the presence of Bob Shaw? I was disabused of this notion when Ian Watson descended on me, looking more like Ken Livingstone than ever. Unlike his wife, Bob proved himself genuine by virtue of his attitude to alcohol ('I like about four cans of Special Brew as a nightcap before I go to bed, sometimes'), relieving me of the inevitable fear that Bernard Smith had corralled the wrong Mr Shaw. The workshop got off to a flying start, and as before everybody seemed to get something out of it -- mostly a lot of

abuse from the rest of us. It was revealed that Bob had the honour of publishing the last story in **Imagine** (issue 30) and had just completed a 120,000 word MS for Gollancz, provisionally titled **Invisible Mountains** until he can think of something more catchy. With regard to **Imagine's** demise, Hilary Robinson opined that it was because the US parent company felt their own, indifferent product **The Dragon** was being threatened by the British zine which was outselling it in the States as well as at home.... This workshop might even get to be a regular annual event if everyone feels about it in six months what they felt on leaving. Anything that hurts so much must be good for you." [CS]

THE BECCON SCENARIO: Marcus Rowland

Beccon feels like one of those institutions which has been around forever (like a Burgess pork pie) -- though 1985's was only the third, and the fourth, if it ever happens, will be the 1987 Eastercon. I always think of Beccons as taking place in hot sunny weather: in this year's drizzle and gloom, the bar stayed packed throughout the weekend, rather than the crowd spilling on to the hotel lawn....

Actual events on Friday were low-key, eg. Colin Fine's "Cards Sharp" quiz (notable for the most incomprehensible rules I've ever seen) and Jon Cowie's fannish talk on computer prediction, the Club of Rome, and Thatcherite economics. It's a law of nature that overhead projector reliability is inversely proportional to the need for visual aids: Beccon's broke down two minutes after the first transparency, leaving 15 acetate sheets circulating around the audience. Minutes before the end, the committee's technical wizards cracked the problem: the mains supply had failed!

Saturday moved towards two climaxes: the GoH speech and the midnight fireworks display. A certain D. Langford arrived expecting to see the **Spock in Manacles** stage show, a bad move since this took place on Sunday. Richard Cowper's speech was witty, informative, but somehow a little forgettable; the display was the most impressive yet, accompanied by Ride of the Valkyries (sans helicopters), the 1812 Overture and Handel's Royal Fireworks Music. A highlight was the large ground-level detonation whose shockwave rattled teeth and hotel windows: reportedly a honeymoon couple had booked into the hotel half an hour previously, and few fans could resist the line "Did the earth move for you, darling?"

Sunday's main event was the afternoon premiere of **Spock in Manacles**. [This is what Teresa meant by K&S.... DRL] Fine performances by Pete Gilligan (Kirk), Geoff Ryman (Spock), Laura Wheatley (Yeoman Lotta Bottle), Graham Head (McCoy and Scott) and Caroline Mullan (Nurse Chapel) were counterpointed by Kim Campbell as a slightly OTT Amazon Queen, Steve Lawson as the chief expendable security guard and shop steward, and Brian Ameringen as the goat. Music by Ian Sorensen included "Bestiality's Best" (to the tune of "Tie Me Kangaroo Down"). A collection raised hundreds of pounds for Live Aid; sales of scripts, books and tapes should bring in funds for some time.

Next morning saw survivors tearfully parting in the lobby, and driving home through torrential rain. Only one worry about the future of Beccon: given the steady escalation of the fireworks displays (soon to violate SALT agreements) and the proximity of the planned '87 venue (NEC) to Birmingham International Airport... h'mm. [MLR]

C.O.A

ALYSON L. ABRAMOWITZ, 132 Burnetts Grove Circle, Netean, Ontario, Canada K2J 1S9 :: BRIAN AMERINGEN, see Caroline Mullan :: ARROW BOOKS (now "A division of Century/Hutchinson Ltd), Brookmount House, 62-65 Chandos Place, Covent Garden, London, WC2N 4NW :: MICHAEL ASHLEY, 5 Woodville Terrace, Bradford, W Yorks, BD5 0JH :: WILLIAM & JANE BAINS, 146 North Rd, Combe Down, Bath, BA2 5DL :: DAVID V. BARRETT: new address "not for publication" :: RICH BROWN, 1808 Lamont NW, Washington, DC 20010, USA :: PETER COHEN, 16 Greenhill Close, Winchester, Hants :: SHAREE CARTON, 2315 Bush St (1), San Francisco, CA 94115, USA :: OSCAR DALGLEISH, 201 Chiswick Village, London, W4 3DG :: JOHN DALLMAN, Flat 4, 27 Terront Rd, Tottenham, London, N.15 :: LILIAN EDWARDS, 1 Braehead Rd, Thorntonhall, Glasgow, until 1 Oct: then Queen's College, Cambridge :: AHRVID ENGHOLM & LOTTIE ERIKSSON, Renstiernas Gata 29, S-116 31 Stockholm, Sweden :: ALAN FERGUSON, 52 High St, Sawston, Cambs, CB2 4BC :: ANNE HAMILL (not Anne Warren, please) as

re :: MALCOLM HODKIN is temporarily indeterminate. On 27
at: "Baidland", 19 Lade Braes Lane, St Andrews, Fife, KY16
AKE JONSSON, Regementsgatan 53, S-723 45 Vasteras, Sweden
NB: Ake never actually moved, spurious complications arising
from the existence of Ake Jönsson in Uppsala.) :: BERNARD
LEAK, 50 Searle St, Cambridge, CB4 3DB :: PETE LYON, 9 Church
Ave, Leeds, LS6 4JX :: LYNNE ANN MORSE, Noordwal 2, 2513 EA
Den Haag, Netherlands (also correct for Roelof Goudriaan:
ignore A43 misprint) :: CAROLINE MULLAN, 9 Graham Rd, Weald-
stone, Harrow, HA3 5RP :: ANNE PAGE, 304a Main St, High Blan-
tyre, Glasgow, G72 0DH :: IAN PEMBLE, 139 Andrewes House, Bar-
bican, London, EC2Y 8BA :: CAMILLA POMEROY, 42 Heol Gleien,
Cwmtyrch-isaf, Swansea, SA9 2TR :: DAVID POWER, 40 South Ave,
Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 1QR :: CHRIS PRIEST is heading for
Pewsey, Wilts :: DAVE & JENNY RAGGETT, 288 Ashley Down Rd,
Ashley Down, Bristol, BS7 9BQ :: LEAH ZELDES SMITH, 2007 West
Howard St, Evanston, IL 60202, USA :: IAN SORENSEN, see Anne
Page :: NEIL THOMPSON, 37 Southwold Place, Beaconhill Green,
Cramington, Northumberland :: BOB TUCKER, 2516/H East Washing-
ton, Bloomington, IL 61701, USA ::

MY BIT

In beer veritas. I was in the pub talking to Steve Higgins
about the theory of fanzines, an awkward subject since he
actually has a theory of fanzines and I'm not sure that I do.
He lashed out with the sort of cruelly penetrating shaft of
savage wit with which people are always flaying my sensitive
ego (ie. "When's the next Ansible, Dave?"), and I was
interested to hear my mouth say: "I'd been thinking of chang-
ing Ansible a bit... it tends to boil down to exquisite, crys-
talline condensations of COA listings and who's won what,
owing to my Duty to the Public, and I'd thought of loosening
up with some more personal stuff -- as in earlier days."

"Great," he said. "What sort of stuff?"

"Er, well, maybe I could take a tip from all those fascinat-
ing SFWA raconteurs and write about my word processor."

For some reason Steve went very silent and thoughtful.
Still, there are personal oddments which can't be flagged as
hot news ("Ansible scoop! Langford squeezes spot!")....

For example, I mentioned SFWA up there (they do rabbit on
about word processors). I dropped out recently owing to lack
of money -- also, because of an Interesting Contrast. I was
having a desultory fight with Arrow, whose sales department
remained my *The Space Eater* without notifying either the
editorial department or, as required by contract, the author.
I'd wanted to buy up the books and flog 'em to you lot for
vast profits (I do have a few, if you're desperate) -- and
suggested that compensation for said lost profits would be in
order. Arrow said, approximately, "All right, we apologize,
now piss off." Informed of this, SFWA said, approximately,
"Sorry, we'd have to sue them to get anything and we don't do
that." The Society of Authors, however, despatched a barrage
of rude letters and in short order had extracted compensation
from an enfeebled Nick Webb (then Arrow boss -- now deposed
as a by-product of the Century takeover). No hard feelings,
and the compensation wasn't that huge, but it was strangely
easy to decide which writers' organization I stayed with....

Nick Webb, meanwhile, has slavishly followed me to Sphere
Books. The first copy of their paperback *Leaky Establishment*
(a thinly disguised chunk of Langford autobiography) has just
arrived, and nearly gave me a heart attack, since under my
name it says *Hugo Award Winning Author*. They wouldn't! They
couldn't! On closer inspection: they hadn't, but editor Colin
Murray is a mean man with the Letraset. Autographed copies
will be almost unescapable at Novacon.

Another likely Novacon publication is *The Transatlantic
Hearing Aid*, a revised and damn nearly posthumous one-volume
edition of my TAFF report, even now being finally pasted up
by Rob (Inca Press) Jackson. To anyone who since 1980 has
maintained unwavering faith that this monster would appear, I
offer thanks and polite disbelief. Cost: around £2 plus an
uncertain amount of postage. To break up the tedium of the
prose, cartoons have been provided by fanartists who are
household names: Stu Kellogg, Alexis Hoover, Rob Heinz....
Place your order yesterday! Act without thinking!

MANUAL FOR AN ATOMIC SWED: Ahrvid Engholm

Bad days have hit the Swedish prozines, in the form of eco-
nomic troubles. *Nova SF* is cutting down from bimonthly to

quarterly, and will from this autumn be published as a paper-
back magazine to save production costs. (Meanwhile we have
less money and fewer pages to publish stories on: there's a
bundle of stories labelled "To be bought" and D.Langford's is
on top of it, but we have to wait a while yet.) The other
prozine, *Jules Verne Magasinet*, has cut down from 80 to 64
pages and announced a fat increase in subscription fees. (At
the same time, Ahrvid Engholm has sold his *first* story to
JVM, a short piece called "Manual for an Atomic Bomb". No
connection, we hope.) A central Swedish fanzine library is
being started by the Alvar Appeltoft Memorial Foundation,
with a view to reference and fan-historical work. The key-
stone of the collection of Sam J.Lundwall's Swedish fanzine
collection (bought by the Foundation in April)... SEFF is
now open for nominations for next year's race (probably to
the British Eastercon, but nominators can vote on this too:
since SEFF has no "natural" goal each year, it's possible to
have different conventions as goals for the different candid-
ates)... Swedish fandom is presently stricken by a feverish
outburst of incomprehensible feuding between many top fans;
another popular occupational therapy is... hush... secret
APAs. At least half a dozen have started this year, and every
one has been revealed since there's always someone among the
handful of members who can't refrain from telling someone
else.... John- Henri Holmberg and Per Insulanders, editors of
Nova, are planning a huge *Scancon* in Stockholm next summer:
"We aim for 1000 attendees." [AE]

INFINITELY IMPROBABLE

"Hold Horns High!" writes Brian Aldiss: "I shall expect you
to join the Aldiss Appreciation Triad...." Incipient groupies
can now rush £8/annum to Pauline Valentine, 25 Margarets Ave,
Long Eaton, Derbyshire, receiving in exchange a lapel badge
("I'm Backing Brian") and such quarterly joys as "news of
Brian's activities... hopefully Questions from Members and a
Brian W.Aldiss Answer Page." Fame, at last.

Unsuitable: Charles Platt's new fanzine *REM* reveals with
deadpan glee that he took legal advice about a possible dam-
ages suit following the Ellison Assault (A43) -- only to be
informed by a regretful attorney that, for the purposes of a
lucrative case, "Mr Ellison just isn't quite famous enough."

Fanfandery: declared candidates for the '86 TAFF race, UK
to Atlanta, are Judith Hanna and Simon Ounsley. TAFF '87 is
aiming (by popular US demand) for Eastercon rather than Con-
spiracy: Brian Earl Brown, Allyn Cadogan and Jeanne Gomoll
have emerged from the closet, which contains at least one
more sucker.... GUEFF '87 will run from Australia to Con-
spiracy, aspirants so far consisting of Valma Brown. SEFF
(Europe to Swecon) was won by write-in candidate Jim Barker:
JB 72 first-place votes, Hans-Jürgen Mader 32, Steve Green
21. A late Swedish campaign swung the result; in the absence
of write-ins, Steve would have just won. One or two bitter
Midland voices have been heard comparing this with last win-
ter's TAFF trauma: one can't deny that it was something of a
blow for the two candidates actually on the ballot. Interest-
ingly, though, the broken-down voting figures just meet
TAFF's new "20%" requirement (A43)....

COFF: this major unpopularity poll's voting leak (A43) was
denounced as "unreliable" by fans who asked questions like
"What about all the votes I put in for Katie Hoare?" Steve
Green and Kev Clarke are now co-administrating the concrete
overcoats: 10p/vote still, to 191 Valley Rd, Solihull, West
Midlands. Future leaks will be Guaranteed and Official, and
the uncoveted trophy itself will be presented at Novacon. In
a feeble attempt to be even more controversial, Steve writes
that "one plan to liven up Novacon 14 which might have over-
shadowed even the stripper was a guest appearance by well-
known sf fan Ken Livingstone; sadly he was unable to attend."

Unidentified Foot-in-mouth Object? Our pseudoscience
expert John Grant reports that lovable sceptic Ian Ridpath
made a clot of himself in a recent radio (LBC) debate, his
savagely reasoned assault on Jenny Randles and her *Science
and the UFOs* (with Peter Warrington) being slightly deflated
when he was "shown not to have read the book". Inflamed by
this and by a Ridpath review in *New Scientist*, Ms Randles is
rumoured to be contemplating legal action.... [PB/ED]

Convention Mentions: ARTICON (4-6 Oct) is another Hatfield
Poly "Shoestringcon": £2 supp £4 att to 17 Royston Rd, St
Albans, Herts.... NOVAcon 15 (1-3 Nov): fascinating committee

punch-ups were rumoured, over subjects like Who Types The Souvenir Fiction Booklet (this year an Ace Double). Sign up now or GoHs White & Langford will sulk. £7 to 86 Berwood Farm Rd, Wyde Green, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham.... MEXICON 2 (7-9 Feb) has reportedly shifted to a second Birmingham hotel (did someone mention the Angus?) after horrified study of the Strathallan's performance at Lazlar Lyricon. Still £9 to 24a Beech Rd, London, N11 2DA.... ALBACON III (Easter, Glasgow) has GoH Joe Haldeman and FGoh John Jarrold (a Special Mexican Guest).... XIICON (29-29 Sept 86, Glasgow): GoH is Harry Harrison. £6 att until 26 Sept 85, to "Beachfield", Calmuir Rd, Lenzie, Glasgow, G66 3JJ.... PERTH (the Australian one) is reportedly bidding for the 1994 Worldcon....

Asimov's SF Magazine is, these days, being edited by Gardner Dozois (380 Lexington Ave, New York, NY 10017, USA).

BSCA Coup! A rumoured takeover plot was greeted with eager yawns from everyone except the committee (whose dim lustreless eyes glowed for the first time in years, at the glorious thought of being thrown out). Rumoured arch-conspirator Dave Hodson is practising a baleful stare after the manner of old and tired Chairman Dorey, but so far tends to overdo it....

Spinrad Banned Again: Norman S's *The Iron Dream* is back on the Index of "youth-threatening writings" in Germany -- no advertising, no display, under-the-counter sales only [SoB]. Since the book's attack on fascist elements in SF/fantasy is sound stuff, we assume the federal inspection board fears that kids will pick up Spinrad's writing style....

Da Organization: this Birmingham-based APA has seceded from the Birmingham SF Group, and sprouted a "fund-raising" paramilitary wing of water-pistol sharpshooters led by grim-jawed hitperson Cath Easthope. Current Organization address: c/o Eunice Pearson, 32 Digby House, Colletts Grove, Kingshurst, Birmingham, B37 6JE. Meanwhile, vibrant FRANK'S APA has fallen into the administrative hands of Ron Gemmill (79 Mansfield Close, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6RN) after intending administrator Maureen Porter's discovery that recent departures -- on the order of legendary lemming swarms -- had shrunk the membership below her Minimal Acceptable Level of 15, or 10, or 2, or whatever it was....

The John W. Campbell Memorial Award for best SF novel of 1984 went to Frederik Pohl's *The Years of the City* (published here by Gollancz) -- continuing the trend of giving novel awards to books of more or less linked short stories....

Another Bloody Award: Arthur C. Clarke has been persuaded to put up a regular £1000 to fund an annual Clarke Award for best British SF novel. Twiddly details are under discussion at the Science Policy and SF Foundations (eg., popular vote or Select Judging Panel? One SFF person incautiously cried, "Our own Booker Prize at last!"). [George Hay]

More Clarke: "Talking of megastars, I spoke to Arthur Clarke on the 'phone when he was over here recently to tell us how wonderful 2010 is and meet Charles, Di and Wogan. He's seen the film three times now and says it gets better each

time. Can you take anything the man says seriously? Once was quite adequate for me...." [A Cravenly Unattributable Source]

Gatherings: THE NEW SOUTHERN FRIENDS IN SPACE meets "every 3rd Sunday" (?) from 15 Sept: Wellington Tavern, Waterloo Rd, near Waterloo Station.... THE READING SF (READING) GROUP now fails to discuss sf on the 3rd Thursday of each month in the Fishermen's Cottage, Kennetside, 8.30pm onward (waifs & strays should ring the Usual Numbers for directions)....

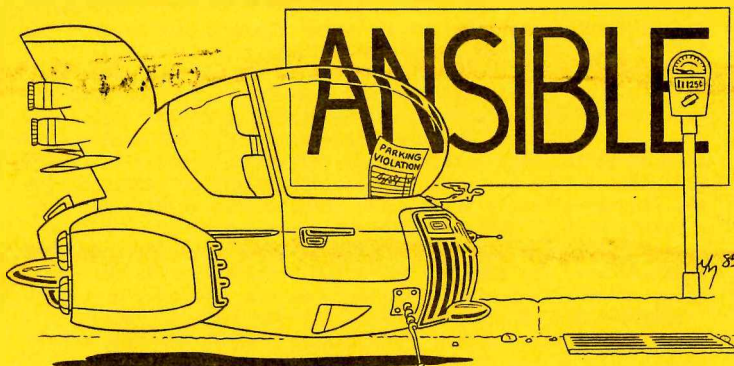
The A. Carol Farewell-America Party "...was marred only by the tendency of the attendees to periodically throw themselves upon Avedon and sob hopelessly. The T-shirt she wore that night, now encrusted with salt, has been forwarded to the Gary Farber Museum of Fanhistory, where the curator will lose it. A belated attempt to appoint a new Charismatic Leader was made; after giving due consideration to Stu Shiffman, Ted White was selected via mystic processes and informed of his new status. "Who, Me?" he yelled, his eyes bugging out in a way that, with practice (on the part of the beholders), could be considered Charismatic. Later Ted made his first pronouncements as C.L., announcing the creation of a new trufannish Lodge: the fwa Order of Magnitude. This is to contain 360 successive hierarchical degrees, arranged in a circle to guarantee that OM adepts arrive right back where they started from; to prevent the Order's levels being infiltrated by frivolous-minded conventioners, advancement will be obtainable only through posted on-paper activity.. that is, these are mail-order degrees...." [Teresa NH, 5-85]

Lisa Tuttle, writing up her *Starburst* interview with Colin "Lifeforce" Wilson, strangely neglected to include the Gorran Haven Sage's main line of conversation -- dealing with such mysteries of the occult as how attracted Mr Wilson is to young lady interviewers in tight jeans. CW hopes to collaborate with A.E. van Vogt on a sequel to *The Space Vampires*, a prospect to make grown critics pull their own heads off....

Eric Bentcliffe sends a tiny newspaper clipping from, evidently, an alternate world: "New Jersey in the early 50s. Harlan, an accountant, becomes obsessed with catching a man who keeps stealing his milk." Not as alarming as the headline sent by indefatigable Dave Wood: WEST JOINS JESUS FURORE

"But This Looks Good..." An SFC listing of October (85) books features *Contact* by Carl Sagan. Publishers Simon & Schuster say it's "not science fiction. It is an engrossing, believable novel, rich in detail and populated by characters about whose lives we care." Yep, including the aliens.

Robert Hale Ltd "have no intention of publishing SF/fantasy 'within the foreseeable future'", reports Charles Stross, presumably after his 17 novels were bounced. Famous *Venture SF* editor Rog Peyton meanwhile repudiates *Ansible* claims that his first two novel choices were Hale reprints: no.1 wasn't, the publishers having merely claimed Hale paternity in hope of increasing the series' prestige. Further rash Peyton statements (concerning how many *Venture SF* books he himself has been able to finish) are, alas, unquotable....



Hazel's Language Lessons #35: GREEK
contributed by Vinç Clarke

βαφανισμ to thrust a radish up the fundament;
a punishment for adulterers in Athens.

ANSIBLE 44, 94 London Rd, Reading, Berks, RG1 5AU, UK.

READ
14 SEP
1985
A..LASTISH 4

REMEMBER to use the POST CODE

Dave Piper
7 Cranley Ave
Ruislip
Middlesex HA4 6BZ